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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KINSHASA 000351

SIPDIS

FOR ECA/A/E/USS NLMEYERS; AF/PD DWHITMAN

E.O. 12958:N/A

TAGS: OEXC SCUL KPAO CG

SUBJECT: FY'05 ECA/A/E/USS Study of the United States  
Institute on "Religious Pluralism in the U.S."

REF: STATE 237049

Post would like to nominate Mr. Bonyeku Ekofo, Professor at  
the Protestant University of the Congo to participate in  
subject program.

Personal Information

IA. Nominee's full name: Bonyeku (first name) "Ekofo" (family  
name)

IB. Date of Birth: August 13, 1953

IC. City of Birth: Kinshasa

ID. Country of Birth: Democratic Republic of the Congo

IE. Country of Residence: DRC

IF. Country of Citizenship: DRC

IG. Home address, telephone and e-mail:  
Protestant University, P.O Box 4745, Kinshasa 2, Democratic  
Republic of the Congo. Tel. 243 9939513, and  
E-mail: fdekobom@yahoo.fr

IH. Gender: Male

II. Medical, Physical, dietary or other personal  
consideration: None.  
Professional Information

IJ. Current Position: Professor of Religion

IK. Current Institutional Affiliation: Protestant University  
of the Congo, Avenue du 24 Nov. Commune Lingwala, P.O. Box  
4745, Kinshasa, DRC

IL. Work Experience:

1987-Present: Professor at the Faculty of Theology,  
Protestant University of the Congo

Previous:

1996-2000: Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Theology, Protestant  
University of Congo

1998: Member of the Council of Staff of the Church of Christ  
in Congo, National office.

1992: Member of Ecumenical Association of Third World  
Theologians

1987: Pastor of International Protestant Parish of Kinshasa,  
French Section

IM. Education, academic and professional training:

1987: Ph.D in Religious Science, University of Human  
Sciences, Strasbourg, France

1982: Master's degree in Sacred Theology, Christian  
Theological Seminary, Indianapolis, United States

1979: Licence (5-year degree) in Theology, Protestant  
University of Congo, Kinshasa, DRC

IN. Active Professional Memberships:  
None

IO. Publications:

"Spiritualite: Un probleme du moment," Revue Zairoise de  
Theologie Protestante, No 3, Kinshasa CEDI 1989

"La Bible et l'Implantation du Christianisme en Afrique,"  
Revue Zairoise de Theologie Protestante, No 4, Kinshasa  
CEDI, 1990

"La Christologie Africaine: Quel contenu?" Revue Zairoise de  
Theologie Protestante, No 6, Kinshasa, CEDI, 1992

"L'Humanite de Jesus dans la tradition synoptique,"

Kinshasa, CEDI, 1993

"La reussite du mariage chretien," Kinshasa, CEDI 1997

1P. Previous travel to US: Private travel and study in the U.S. in the early 80's.

1Q. Evidence of fluency in written and oral English:  
Professor Ekofo has very good oral English skills. His written English can be a little awkward, as is often the case here, but he can communicate clearly in written English.

1R. Justification: Dr. Ekofo is a professor of religion at the Protestant University, and he primarily teaches the New Testament. However, Professor Ekofo also has a keen interest in the political and social aspects of religious pluralism. While he is not an expert, Dr. Ekofo has a good general grasp of the issues involved in religious pluralism as well as a good understanding of the basics of the U.S. political system. He understands the nature of this Institute and he is eager to develop a course on the role of religion in the U.S. and the relevance of our experience to the DRC.  
The Protestant University is one of the leading universities in the DRC. It has approximately 5000 students and three Faculties (Law, Theology, and Economics and Business Administration) that offer a wide variety of courses. We have an excellent working relationship with the Protestant University. Participation in this Institute would provide a major opportunity to enhance this relationship and to expand the range of courses with an American Studies content at this major institution of higher learning.

There is little, if any, teaching in the DRC of religious pluralism as it is taught in the U.S. The DRC is religiously complicated. About half of the population is Catholic, with the remainder being divided among Kimbanguism (a home-grown version of Christianity), various Protestant denominations, Islam, and traditional religions. It is therefore important to begin to establish in the DRC as soon as possible the study of religion and its interaction with politics.

Professor Ekofo's participation in this Institute would be a valuable contribution to this effort. This is particularly true since Belgium and France - where most Congolese pursue out-of-country academic studies - do not offer the same level of religious complexity that exists in the U.S. and the DRC. By participating in this Institute, Dr. Ekofo can develop a course in religious pluralism that can serve as a model for other institutions of higher learning in the DRC.

#### 1S. Short personal statement

I am interested in that program especially when I read the project: "Religious Pluralism in the United States". As you can see in my curriculum vitae, I did part of my education in the United States at the Christian Theology Seminar of Indianapolis from 1980-82. Since I left the United States in 1982, I never returned to that country. There were certain things I wanted to understand, but never had a chance to do it.

One of those things is the relation between the government and the church in the United States. What's really the relationship between the church and the state? I think that the understanding of that phenomenon will allow us to help our students, who will become leaders of their churches to follow the experience of churches in the United States of America and do the same thing in our country.

We all know that the Democratic Republic of Congo is heading to a democratic system. And also, we know that the USA has one of the great and good democracy systems in the world. If I get a chance to understand it, I will help my country as much as I can.

1T. Name, telephone, fax number and e-mail address of post commission action Officer:  
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